

FAQS: PVAAS and the Transition of PA's Assessment System

Keystone Exams and the PA Common Core PSSA

PVAAS and Keystone Exams:

- 1. When will PVAAS provide reporting for the Keystone exams?**
 - PDE is planning for the fall 2013 PVAAS reporting to include value-added/growth reporting on the Keystone exams administered in 2012-2013 and PVAAS student projections to future Keystone exams.
- 2. Which students will be included in the PVAAS value-added/growth reporting on the Keystone exams?**
 - Students enrolled in a Keystone-related course when they took the Keystone exam will be included in reporting.
- 3. Which students will have projections to future Keystone exams?**
 - Students who have not yet taken a Keystone exam AND have already taken a grade 5 PSSA testing; AND
 - Students enrolled in a Keystone-related course AND were not Proficient on a prior Keystone exam
- 4. Will students who take a Keystone exam as a re-test be included in the PVAAS value-added/growth reporting for the Keystone exams?**
 - Students taking a Keystone exam as a re-test will be included ONLY if the student is enrolled in a Keystone-related course when they re-tested on the Keystone exam.
 - If a student receives supplemental services/remediation, they are only included in PVAAS value-added reporting IF they are retaking the Keystone-related course, followed by retaking the Keystone exam.
- 5. Will all students taking a Keystone exam be included in ONE value-added/growth report? For example, our LEA/district will be administering the Algebra I Keystone exam this year to 8th, 9th, and 11th graders. Will all of those students be included in one growth report for the Algebra I Keystone exam?**
 - Reporting on the Keystone exams will be provided based on those students who are enrolled in a Keystone-related course and took the Keystone exam at the end of the course in 2012-2013.
 - Students who were NOT enrolled in a Keystone-related course, but took a Keystone exam for AYP purposes only will NOT be included in PVAAS Keystone reporting.
 - The PVAAS Keystone reporting is NOT reported by grade level, it is reported by Keystone exam and by LEA/district and school.
 - PVAAS Keystone reporting is provided at the LEA/district and school levels. For example, if there are students in a district taking Algebra I (course +Keystone exam) in the middle school and students taking Algebra I in the high school (course + Keystone exam), the LEA/district and EACH school will receive a PVAAS report on Algebra I based on the students enrolled in the course and taking the Keystone exam.
 - Example: If 7th and 8th graders are enrolled in an Algebra I course in a middle school serving grades 6-8 and take the Algebra I Keystone exam, the middle school will receive one PVAAS report on Algebra I for those students (both 7th and 8th graders combined).

- Example: If 9th and 10th graders are enrolled in an Algebra I course in a high school serving grades 9-12 and take the Algebra I Keystone exam, the high school will receive one PVAAS report on Algebra I for those students (both 9th and 10th graders combined).
6. **Since we are administering Keystone exams throughout the year, will schools receive growth reports throughout the year based on those Keystone exams? For example, will we receive a growth report for just those students taking the Keystone exam in the first window (December & January)? Then another growth report later for those students taking the Keystone exam in the spring testing window (spring 2013)?**
 - The districts/schools receiving PVAAS Keystone reporting will receive these as one report per district/school per school year. The reports will NOT be delineated for each testing window.
 - PVAAS value-added reporting for Keystone exams is currently scheduled to be released one time per year and will occur in the fall. This will occur at the same time as the annual fall PVAAS reporting release.
 - Custom Diagnostic Reports can be used for user-defined growth reporting; this will allow districts/schools to assess growth of students taking the Keystone exams in the various windows.
 7. **How can we estimate growth when the Keystone exams are different assessments than the PSSA?**
 - The model that will be used to estimate growth for Keystone exams is the same as the PVAAS model currently in place for the grade 11 PSSA.
 - This is different than the PVAAS model used for reporting for grades 4-8, reading and math. Students taking the Keystone exams will have PSSA data from previous years. The model examines the relationship between the statewide results of students' previous PSSA scores and their current Keystone scores to determine where, on average, a student falls in the Keystone test distribution given their prior testing performance.
 - Positive growth means the group of students, on average, scored higher than their peers with similar testing history, while negative growth indicates the group of students, on average, scored lower than their peers with similar testing history.
 8. **How can you project to a Keystone exam when the student hasn't taken a Keystone exam yet to get that history?**
 - Projections to the Keystone exam are not available until after the first group of Pennsylvania students have taken the assessment (SY12-13). Once data from the first year of Keystone testing is available (summer 2013), SAS EVAAS will link those students to their prior PSSA data. SAS EVAAS will use the relationship of those students' Keystone scores with their prior PSSA data to determine where students who have not yet taken a Keystone exam are likely to score, given how students with similar testing histories performed on the first year of administration.
 - This means that PVAAS is planning to provide projections to future Keystone exams in the fall of 2013 for students who have not yet taken the Keystone exam.
 9. **How can you project to a Keystone exam from the PSSA data when those are different assessments?**
 - Based on the first year of Keystone administration (SY12-13), SAS EVAAS will have statewide data for students testing on both the PSSA and each respective Keystone exam.
 - SAS EVAAS will utilize the relationship established between scores of students who took the Keystone exam and their previous PSSA scores to determine how past performance on PSSA influences scores on the Keystone exam.
 - The PVAAS methodology used to yield projections to future Keystone exams will be the same methodology that has been used for projections to the 11th grade PSSA.

10. Will the growth measures we receive in fall 2013 be reliable given PA schools are administering the Keystone exams for the first time during SY12-13? How can the model be determined with only one year of data?

- The PVAAS value-added model that is being used for the Keystone exams is designed in a way that it will easily accommodate the transition to the new test. The model is based on the relationship of the prior testing history of students who took the Keystone exam to their Keystone scores; there is a large wealth of this PSSA data available. The value-added model compares how students in each school performed to how the average school in the state performed with students with a similar testing history. Therefore in the first year SAS EVAAS will be able to make that comparison.

11. Will the projections we receive next year be reliable given we are just now giving the Keystone exams? How can the models be determined with only one year of data?

- The PVAAS projection model for Keystone exams is designed in a way that it will easily accommodate the transition to the new test. The model is based on the relationship of the prior testing history of students who took the Keystone exam to their Keystone scores; there is a large wealth of this PSSA data available. For projections, SAS EVAAS will use the relationship of the PSSA to the Keystone exam to determine how students with a similar PSSA testing history who have not yet taken the Keystone exam will score on a future test.

PVAAS and PA Common Core PSSA:

1. Will there be a year or two when we do not get PVAAS reports as Pennsylvania is transitioning to a PSSA aligned to the PA Common Core?

- No, PDE is NOT anticipating any gap in reporting from PVAAS. This is due to the capabilities of the EVAAS methodology to address changes in assessments within a statewide assessment system.
- SAS EVAAS has significant experience in working with states and large districts through transitions of an assessment system.

2. How can we have reliable estimates of growth when the PSSA is changing and will now be based on the PA Common Core?

- The base year for reporting will be reset once the PA Common Core PSSA is administered.
- During this transition period, each year will serve as its own base year, and growth will be based on students maintaining their position in the state-wide distribution of scores for each year. Once the distribution of scores has proven consistent from year to year, the base year will be set, and growth will be based on students maintaining their position within the new base year's distribution.

3. How can we have accurate projections to PSSAs (even our current projections) when those students will be taking a "new" PSSA based on the PA Common Core?

- The projection model used for the new PSSA is the same as the projection model being used for Keystone exams. Furthermore, since SAS EVAAS is mapping the scores to have a consistent distribution from year to year, SAS EVAAS will be able to use the previous version of the PSSA mixed with the new version of the PSSA to determine the relationship between the scores, and allow the PVAAS system to estimate where students will perform in future years given their prior testing history.